

these corps on the day appointed, 17th of June, owing to the heavy and continuous rain; but the Adjutant of the district reports that they are still deserving of the good report I made of them last year. The Carterton Company furnished two representatives to the Colonial Prize Firing.

Greytown.

In this district are one Cavalry troop and two Rifle companies, consisting of 130 men.

The Greytown Troop are well mounted, and turned out for inspection in a very creditable manner. The Greytown Rifles were better than last year, and the Featherston Company very attentive.

PROVINCE OF HAWKE'S BAY.

This Province contains one Cavalry, one Artillery, and two Rifle corps, amounting to 214 men.

The Wairoa Rifles drilled fairly. In consequence of their exposed position, they have been armed with Snider rifles; and special prizes were set apart for competition between this corps and Poverty Bay Rifles, who are similarly armed.

The Hawke's Bay Cavalry mustered well at inspection, but require more consecutive training; they have, however, no other instructor than their own officers. I regret to be unable to report improvement in the Artillery corps since last year; but they also labour under the disadvantage of having no thoroughly qualified instructor.

The Napier Rifles are in very fair order. A large proportion of them attended class-firing with good results; and they furnished one representative to the Colonial Prize Firing.

PROVINCE OF NELSON.

During the last year the Artillery corps has been disbanded, leaving only two companies of Rifles in the Province—one in the town, and the other at Waimea,—amounting to 82 men. As mentioned in my report of last year, the Volunteer movement has been declining for some time in this Province, the numbers gradually being reduced to the present strength.

The City Rifles are now composed of young men who have lately joined, and appear desirous of restoring the company to its former state. I am led to believe that there is some chance of reorganizing this corps, as several of its present members were originally Cadets.

The Waimea Company is small, but improving.

PROVINCE OF MARLBOROUGH.

In this Province there were 158 Volunteers on 31st March, 1872, of which number 105 qualified for capitation. They are very much scattered, and difficult to collect together for parades. I was not able to inspect this district, as I left it to the end of my tour, and the weather was too broken.

PROVINCE OF CANTERBURY.

On the 31st March, 1872, this Province comprized one Cavalry, three Artillery, two Engineer, and nine Rifle corps, amounting to 566 men, of whom 386 earned capitation.

The Christchurch, Lyttelton, and Timaru Artillery, all worked their guns well, and made good practice. I inspected most of the other corps separately; but I regret to say that they did not generally muster in such numbers as I should have wished. This may be attributed to the inclemency of the weather, and the want of interest displayed by the general public in the Volunteer movement. It is to be hoped, however, that the meeting of the representatives at the Colonial Prize Firing from the various parts of the Colony, recently held at Christchurch, will tend to resuscitate the feeling of interest which was once shown by the people of this Province in the Volunteers, and add to their zeal and energy. There were eight representatives at the above-named meeting, of whom two competed for Cavalry championship. A small number attended class-firing; but the want of a range near the town is much felt.

PROVINCE OF OTAGO.

On 31st March, 1871, this Province (including Southland) contained 1,080 adult Volunteers, of whom 701 earned capitation.

On the 31st March, 1872, there were 1,008 enrolled, of whom 827 were efficient.

There are at present two Artillery, fifteen Rifle, and two Naval corps, all of which I inspected, except those at Southland, which place I could not visit, in consequence of my being obliged to return to Christchurch for the prize firing by a certain day.

On the whole, I found the several corps improved since last year, especially those in the outlying districts, which all mustered well, except the Waikouaiti Company.

The Dunedin Artillery and Naval corps made good practice.

I had an opportunity of seeing over 300 men of the town corps at battalion drill, when they performed several movements very creditably, considering the few opportunities they have for assembling for this purpose. It would be a very great advantage if the officers and non-commissioned officers were compelled to attend a course of spring drills under the Adjutant, as the whole working of the battalion depends upon their knowledge of their duties. The class-firing throughout this Province has been very general, the particulars of which are given in another portion of my report. Much credit is due to Major Atkinson and the staff sergeants of this district for their untiring zeal in the performance of this important duty. Good results are shown by the large proportion of prizes carried off by the Otago representatives at the Colonial Prize Firing.

For six years the Champion Belt of the Colony has been won by this Province, and this year Captain Wales, the champion of 1871, was again successful, and having had the honor of winning the belt two years consecutively, it now becomes his own property. This fact speaks volumes for the interest displayed in rifle practice by the Volunteers of this Province, and more especially by Captain Wales himself, as the Champion Belt has hitherto never been won by the same person more than once.